

REFLECTIONS HIGHLIGHT CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN DAY

By Kathleen Piché, Public Affairs Director



Over 60 Native Americans, mental health clinicians, LGBTQ experts and community members gathered on Friday, September 26, 2014, to commemorate California Native American Day and present an afternoon of discussion and education around Native American mental health and LGBTQ issues.

The event, entitled *Reflections of Native Wellness*, was sponsored by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), Native Communities of Care, the City of Los Angeles AIDS Coordinator's Office, the Red Circle Project (at Aids Project Los Angeles) and the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA).



Donnie Salcedo, member of the Quechan and Laguna Pueblo Tribes and Case Manager for the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians, Tribal Family Services, served as Master of Ceremonies.

Opening comments were made by LACDMH psychologist, Melanie Cain, and Michelle Enfield, Program Coordinator at Red Circle Project. A blessing by George Funmaker and drumming by Changing Spirits followed.



Gabriel Estrada, Ph.D., Associate Professor, California State University, Long Beach, spoke about his personal experience being Native American and HIV positive.

A delicious lunch was shared prior to the afternoon program which consisted of Talking Circles centered around the stigma associated with mental health and sexual identity issues. Michelle Enfield presented on the two spirit (the Native American term for homosexual) etymology and history, and closing comments were made by Dan Dickerson, M.D., addiction and Assistant Research psychiatrist at UCLA, and Melanie Cain.

